



## ***PMDs – Growing Chicago Business for 20 Years***

In the early 1980s Clybourn Avenue was considered by many a gritty industrial wasteland, used primarily as a shortcut downtown for drivers. That changed in 1988 when the first Planned Manufacturing District (PMD) was created along Clybourn Avenue, dramatically changing the area into what it is today by transforming old industrial sites into a retail “buffer” zone while solidifying the heavier industrial “core” sub-district to the west. The PMD succeeded in its intentions – to foster the city’s industrial base, maintain the city’s diversified economy, and encourage industrial investment, modernization and expansion by providing stable and predictable industrial environments.

Since then 14 other PMDs have been created in Chicago. Cities nationwide have noticed their success, including New York, Seattle, Portland and Milwaukee, and have studied them as models for their own economic development. PMDs have proven to be one of the most successful zoning tools used to retain industrial jobs and encourage manufacturing and industrial growth in Chicago, and are celebrating 20 years of nurturing and strengthening local businesses.

### **How have PMDs benefited local businesses?**

Many Chicago businesses can be called success stories in no small part because of PMDs. Several businesses attribute their growth to the role of PMDs.

- Bob Doepel, owner of **Chicago Scenic Studios**, remembers life as a business owner 30 years ago before PMDs. “The creation of PMDs was a perfect solution for my business. I have been in the Goose Island PMD for 10 years now, and it allows me the space to grow my business and the security of knowing my business is not in jeopardy from encroachment by non-industrial uses.”
- Steve Kersten, president of family-owned **Water Saver Faucet**, said “we like our current location in the Chicago-Halsted PMD because it is centrally situated in the city, which offers a diversity of skilled employees and has many transportation options for our employees to commute to work. In fact, we have been so successful in our PMD that we have plans of expanding into the Goose Island PMD.”
- **C.H. Robinson**, one of the world’s largest third-party logistics firms, has found a home in the Clybourn Corridor PMD. Patrick Nolan, director of the Chicago Central office, emphasizes how their city location is critical to attracting their college-educated workforce, and how the movement into the Clybourn PMD helped almost double their number of employees, from 400 in 2005 to more than 760 to date.

- Marilyn Labkon, owner of family-owned **General Iron**, and Jay Goltz, CEO and founder of The Goltz Group – comprised of **Artists' Frame Service**, Jayson Home & Garden, and Chicago Art Source – can also attest to the advantages of operating and expanding their businesses within a PMD.

### **How has Chicago's long-term economic development plans benefited from the PMDs?**

Historically, the movement of residential and commercial businesses into an industrial area created friction regarding land-use compatibility, safety problems and traffic issues—leading to displacement of industry and loss of high-paying jobs. Ted Wysocki, president and CEO of the **Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Council** stresses how PMDs have enabled industry in Chicago's neighborhoods to grow and thrive with long-term land use planning and public investment in infrastructure and other key supports. For example, before the Goose Island PMD was created in 1991, the area was home to 25 firms employing 1,000 people. Today these numbers have more than doubled to over 60 firms employing nearly 5,000 people.

The LEED Council is instrumental in supporting industrial businesses and head-of-household jobs on Chicago's near north side, and helped create many of the city's PMDs, including the Clybourn Corridor and Goose Island PMDs. For more information, contact LEED Council's Director of Economic Development, **Mike Holzer** at (773) 929-5552 x225 or at [mike@leedcouncil.org](mailto:mike@leedcouncil.org)

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